(c) the steps taken by authority concerned to rectify the problem;

(d) whether the computerised complaints registering machine did not work properly there during this period, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether some problems also occurred during the same period last year, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A large number of cable faults had occurred in this exchange area during the month of July and August, 2003. Due to these cable faults, 14,589 telephones went out of order. However, no cable fault occurred in Pocket C-13, Sector-3, Rohini.

(c) Majority of complaints were attended to within 3 days after rectifying cable fault.

(d) and (e) No, Sir.

Leave of EDDA Staff

3050. SHRI VEER SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether EDDA staff in pursuance of Talwar Committtee Report is entitled to some leave which lapses if not availed;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether EDDA staff, availing of such leave, has to make arrangement of his/her substitute during the leave period and some payment is made to the substitute;

(d) whether this rule has been changed by the Superintendent, Bihar Sharif Postal Circle without issuing any formal order; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor and what action Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) to (c) Consequent upon implementation of recommendations of Justice Talwar Committee constituted to examine system of Extra Departmental Agents, now called Gramin Dak Sevaks, their conditions of employment, wage structure etc., ten days' paid leave for every half year without facility of carry forward or encashment was

introduced for all Extra Departmental Agents (Now called Gramin Dak Sevaks) including EDDA (Extra Departmental Delivery Agent now called Gramin Dak Sevaks Mail Deliver) *vide* Government orders dated 17-12-98. In addition to paid leave, Gramin Dak Sevaks can also avail leave without allowances upto a maximum of 180 days in a year which can further be relaxed in exceptional cases like genuine illness. The Gramin Dak Sevak is required to provide his/her substitute to man the post during leave period, if this arrangement is felt necessary by the leave sanctioning authority. In such cases, substitute is paid minimum of the Time Related Continuity Allowance (TRCA) whereas the regular Gramin Dak Sevak gets his allowance as usual for the period of paid leave.

(d) and (e) The SPOs Nalanda Division Bihar Shariff has not made any change in the existing rules and the instructions of the Department. Therefore, no action against the SPOs, Nalanda Division is called for.

Telecommunication Network during the Tenth Five Year Plan Period

3051. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have any plan to expend telecommunication network in the country particularly in rural areas during the Tenth Five Year Plan period;

(b) if so, the details of amount to be spent thereon; and

(c) the steps Government are taking in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN):(a)Yes,Sir.

(b) An outlay of Rs. 86984.00 crores including budgetary support of Rs. 1500 crore has been approved by the Planning Commission for the Telecommunications sector for the Tenth Five Year Plan.The estimated amount needed during the Tenth Plan in rural areas is Rs. 8004.00 crores. These estimated amounts are excluding investment to be made by the private sector.

(c) Government PSUs (Public Sector Undertakings) have planned to add 395.23 lakh DELs (Direct Exchange Lines) including 14.67 lakh rural DELs during Tenth Five Year Plan (2002—07) subject to availability of resources.